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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 7th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 7 October 2002, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Maitland ..... (South Africa)

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Agenda item 75: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

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02-62261 (E)
0262261

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 75: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (A/57/20 and A/57/213)

1. **The Chairman** drew attention to the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (A/57/20) and the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) (A/57/213).

2. In the current month there were several dates of great significance for outer space matters. 10 October marked the thirty-fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (Outer Space Treaty). That Treaty had contributed to the progressive development of international space law. While the environment surrounding outer space activities was rapidly changing, the main principles of the Treaty remained valid and useful. 4 October marked the forty-fifth anniversary of the dawn of the space age — the launch of the first artificial earth satellite. International cooperation in outer space had led to many scientific and technical achievements. Another celebration in October was World Space Week, celebrated since 1999, which, inter alia, provided opportunities for children around the world to learn about space science and to aspire to a brighter future.

3. At the same time many people, particularly in developing countries, were not fully aware of the benefits of space science and technology. In that connection, it was gratifying to note the synergy which had been created among the efforts of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities and the Office for Outer Space Affairs in promoting the use of space applications in the interests of sustainable development at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. He looked forward to their contribution in implementing the outcome of the Summit.

4. **Mr. Gonzalez Aninat** (Chile), Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, said that over the past four decades of its service to the international community, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had accomplished a great deal in its work. It had been instrumental in the adoption by the General Assembly of the Outer Space Treaty, and had made important contributions to the establishment of the international legal regime governing outer space activities, which now consisted of five treaties and five sets of legal principles and declarations. The Committee had also increased opportunities for developing countries to receive training in space applications through the creation and expansion of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. Through its preparatory work, the Committee had ensured the successful convening of UNISPACE III, at which the Vienna Declaration had been unanimously adopted, containing a common strategy to expand the benefits of space science and technology in order to enhance human security and development.

5. The Committee was well aware that space science and technology could contribute to enriching the lives of many people, particularly in developing countries, but recognized the challenge of establishing a clear link between space benefits and the priority goals pursued by the United Nations in human security and development. The benefits and potential of space science and technology had not been fully taken into account by the global conferences held by the United Nations in recent years. The Committee would strengthen its efforts to promote the peaceful uses of outer space to eradicate poverty and to support the global agenda for development.

6. The Committee's work had covered the following main areas: ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes; implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III; the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its thirty-ninth session; the work of the Legal Subcommittee at its forty-first session; spin-off benefits of space technology; and space and society. The Committee and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee had made further progress in turning the recommendations of UNISPACE III into concrete action. Following UNISPACE III, the Committee had adopted a unique mechanism to implement the recommendations, consisting of three main elements: consideration of agenda items that had relevance to the recommendations at the annual sessions of the Committee and its Subcommittees; work conducted throughout the year by the action teams established by the Committee to implement the recommendations; and activities of the Office for Outer Space Affairs that complemented and supported the work of the action teams.

7. The action teams established in 2001 had taken up issues relating to disaster management, environmental monitoring strategy, management of Earth's resources, weather and climate monitoring, public health, promotion of sustainable development, space-based navigation and positioning systems, capacity-building and increasing public awareness of the importance of space activities. More than 50 countries and 35 organizations were participating in the work of the action teams. All the action teams reported to the Subcommittee on their activities, the results of their work and their work plans. A dynamic and flexible mechanism had thus been created, involving a large number of countries, intergovernmental and non-governmental entities. He was confident that the Committee would be able to achieve tangible results in carrying out the recommendations of UNISPACE III by 2004, when the General Assembly would review and appraise their implementation. The mechanism could serve as an excellent model for promoting international cooperation with all stakeholders with a view to achieving the objectives of United Nations conferences.

8. The Committee had begun its preparations for the review by the General Assembly of the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III. A working group had been established to prepare a report to the General Assembly, and it had made recommendations on the format of the review and the expected outcome. Regarding the organizational aspects of the review, the Committee recommended that a separate item entitled "Review of the implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space" should be included in the agenda of the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session in 2004, in addition to the item entitled "International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space".

9. In addition to follow-up to UNISPACE III, the Committee had taken up the questions of integrating the benefits of the advancement in space science and technology and their applications in achieving the objectives of global conferences and the global agenda to enhance human security and development. In that regard, the Committee had developed a statement to the World Summit on Sustainable Development on the use of various space applications to promote sustainable development. Furthermore, the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, which coordinated space-related activities within the United Nations system, had prepared a brochure with examples of how the United Nations system was using space technology to support sustainable development. Just before the World Summit, the Office for Outer Space Affairs had organized a symposium on the topic "Space technology provides solutions for sustainable development".

10. There was increasing synergy among the efforts made by the Committee, the United Nations system and the Office for Outer Space Affairs in integrating the practical use of space science and technology into the implementation of the global agenda to enhance human security and development. As part of the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III, the Committee, through its action team on sustainable development, would review the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and identify concrete action to promote sustainable development with the use of space science and technology. That activity would be carried out in close coordination and cooperation with the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities. The Office for Outer Space Affairs also planned to organize a series of symposia to study the practical use of space science and technology in addressing specific themes relating to sustainable development.

11. With regard to the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, he said that the Subcommittee had continued its consideration of the item entitled "Implementation of an integrated, space-based global natural disaster management system". In accordance with its three-year work plan, the Subcommittee had reviewed the existing and proposed satellite and data distribution systems that could be used operationally for disaster management. In 2003, the Subcommittee would review possible global operational structures to handle natural disaster management, making maximum use of existing and planned space systems. The outcome of that consideration would provide policy guidelines for the work of the action team on disaster management.

12. Under its three-year work plan, the Subcommittee had also considered the item entitled "Means and mechanisms for strengthening inter-agency cooperation and increasing the use of space applications and services within and among entities of the United Nations". At its 2002 session, the Subcommittee had considered barriers to the greater use of space applications and services within the United Nations system as well as specific means and mechanisms to eliminate those barriers. He wished to highlight the

increasing synergy between the work of the Subcommittee and that of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities to promote the use of space science and technology in the priority activities of the United Nations system.

13. The Subcommittee had made further progress concerning the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. The working group on that issue had finalized its report entitled "A review of international documents and national processes potentially relevant to the peaceful uses of nuclear power sources in outer space". The Subcommittee had agreed to request the working group to develop a set of potential options for its consideration on any additional steps that might be deemed appropriate with regard to space nuclear power sources, including that of drawing up a further multi-year work plan.

14. The Committee on Space Research and the International Astronautical Federation had organized a symposium on the theme "Remote sensing for substantive water management in arid and semi-arid countries". At the 2003 session of the Subcommittee, a symposium would be held on applications of satellite navigation and their benefits to developing countries.

15. In accordance with a recommendation of UNISPACE III, the Subcommittee had continued its efforts to strengthen its partnership with industry. During the reporting period, a symposium was held on the theme "Expanding operational applications of very-high-resolution remote sensing: potential and challenges in civilian applications". At its next session, the Subcommittee planned to consider a new item, entitled "The use of space technology for the medical sciences and public health". That issue was also being taken up by the action team on public health.

16. With regard to the work of the Legal Subcommittee, he said that the Subcommittee had continued its intense and in-depth consideration of the agenda item entitled "Consideration of the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment and the preliminary draft Protocol on Matters Specific to Space Assets". Two intersessional meetings had been held within the framework of the ad hoc consultative mechanism, which had allowed the Subcommittee to make good progress in the consideration of the issue. The Subcommittee had agreed to consider in 2003 two sub-items relating to the possibility of the United Nations serving as the supervisory authority under the preliminary draft protocol and the relationship between the terms of the preliminary draft protocol and the rights and obligations of States under the legal regime applicable to outer space. The Convention and the draft protocol were of particular interest to the commercial sector. He was confident that the Subcommittee would successfully meet the challenge of reconciling any conflicts between existing space law and international financial practices.

17. The Subcommittee had continued to consider the definition and delimitation of outer space and the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit. It had reconvened its working group to consider matters relating to the definition and delimitation of outer space.

18. Regarding the concept of the "launching State", he said that the Subcommittee had reviewed measures to increase adherence to and promote the full application of the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects, 1972, and the Convention on the Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space, 1975.

19. With the agreement of the General Assembly, the Subcommittee had established a working group to consider the "Status and application of the five United Nations treaties on outer space". The working group's terms of reference included the status of the treaties, review of their implementation and obstacles to their universal acceptance, as well as promotion of space law.

20. At the Subcommittee's 2002 session, the International Institute of Space Law and the European Centre for Space Law had organized a symposium on "Prospects for Space Traffic Management".

21. Turning to other matters considered by the Committee at its 2002 session, he said that the Committee had begun to consider a new item entitled "Space and society". That item had been included in the Committee's agenda in accordance with the recommendation of UNISPACE III, in the Vienna Declaration, to increase awareness among decision makers and the general public of the importance of peaceful space activities in improving the common economic and social welfare of humanity. During its consideration of the item, the Committee had noted that a wide range of space-based services were improving the lives of people and helping to create a global society, that research and exploration in outer space were a source of inspiration for people in all countries, and that outer space was a theme that could attract

children to science and mathematics. The Committee had stressed the importance of education in space science and engineering.

22. The Committee had also begun its consideration of a report on the activities of the International Satellite System for Search and Rescue (COSPAS-SARSAT), which had been in operation since 1982 with the goal of assisting aviators and mariners in distress. That cooperative venture had assisted in the rescue of over 13,000 persons over the years. The Committee believed that the extraordinary success of that programme should be reflected in the draft resolution entitled "International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space".

23. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/51, of 10 December 2001, and the agreement reached on the measures relating to the working methods of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies, informal consultations had been held among the members of the Committee and the regional groups concerning the composition of the bureaux of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies for the third three-year term. In that regard, the Committee had decided to hold intersessional informal consultations in 2003 with the participation of the chairs of the regional groups. As to the membership of the Committee, the General Assembly, in 2001, had reached agreement on the enlargement of the membership. Algeria and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had applied for membership. In addition, the Committee had agreed to grant permanent observer status to the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites and Spaceweek International Association.

24. In conclusion, he said that the modern world was characterized by two phenomena — globalization and the technology revolution. Those two phenomena were combining to create horizontal networks, within which each organization was focusing on its own niche, in order to take maximum political, economic and financial advantage by making right decisions at the right time. Those countries without the capability, knowledge and resources to take appropriate and timely action were much less likely to survive in a rapidly changing world. They were more vulnerable to sudden changes in the pattern of trade, finance and investment.

25. All States needed the capacity to understand and adapt global technologies to local needs. There was a need for new international initiatives and the fair use of global rules to channel new technologies towards the most urgent needs of the world's poor people. Space technology with its emerging applications would require new avenues of international cooperation. Over the past four decades, space science and technology had freed human beings from the confines of planet Earth. They must now free human beings from want. Outer space could contribute to development that led to freedom by expanding opportunities and choices in the daily lives of people. However, for that to happen, constant efforts must be made towards people-oriented research and development in space science and technology and their applications. He was confident that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space would continue to play a leading role in expanding the practical use of space application in many areas of social, economic and cultural development, so that the basic needs of individuals, particularly in developing countries, could be met.

26. **Mr. Sørensen** (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the European Union, and also Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, said that the European Union believed that space science and technology would play an increasing role in achieving the goals and monitoring the implementation of international agreements. Space applications were of fundamental importance for the sustainable development of all countries and regions of the world. In that regard, it was gratifying to see that space applications, notably Earth observation for various purposes including disaster management, were recognized as an important tool in the plan of implementation of the decisions of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

27. The European Union attached great importance to the work of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, including its organizational and educational work, and its efforts to enhance coordination within the United Nations system and strengthen regional capacities. The European Union strongly supported the efforts to ensure that space science and technology contributed to the broader efforts to achieve the Millennium development goals.

28. The European Union welcomed the active role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III. The working group of the Legal Subcommittee had successfully concluded its review of the concept of the "launching State". Another working group had prepared a report on the implementation of the outcome of UNISPACE III (A/57/20, annex I). The

European Union fully supported the recommendations of that working group.

29. Universally accepted guidelines and recommendations to allow effective control of pollution in outer space must be elaborated in the near future. The European Union urged the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee to submit its proposal on debris mitigation guidelines to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space as soon as possible. The European Union believed that the question of the international law aspects of the issue should be added to the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee without further delay. Moreover, it was concerned about the risk of private corporations attempting to commercially exploit the Moon or other celestial bodies, without concern about prevention of pollution and in disregard of the principles of international space law. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space must include that issue, and especially its juridical implications, in the agenda of its next session.

30. Europe was one of the major players in the space field, and the European Space Agency (ESA), an intergovernmental organization with 15 member States, was responsible for the majority of its space activities. In order to stimulate the use of space applications in the European Union, ESA, together with the European Commission, had developed an overall European space strategy. The cooperation projects between the European Union and ESA included the Galileo project and the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) project. The Galileo project was a complete civil radio navigation system with many potential applications, for example in road, rail, air and maritime traffic control. It was expected to be operational from 2008. The GMES programme combined space-borne, land-based and airborne technologies to track environmental pollution, react to emergencies and improve cross-border response to catastrophic events.

31. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development, ESA had made a presentation concerning several of its programmes to promote sustainable development and the first data received from the ENVISAT satellite. It was envisaged that the satellite would provide at least five years' worth of data on global warming, depletion of the ozone layer and climate change. In August 2002, MSG-1 had been launched, the first representative of a new generation of meteorological satellites.

32. Along with the United States of America, the Russian Federation, Japan and Canada, ESA and its member States were cooperating in the International Space Station programme, which was also a noteworthy example of peaceful cooperation in outer space. Europe had developed and was developing space tools, systems and services not only in support of European policies on environment and climate but also to play its role in the global effort to monitor the health of the planet.

33. **Mr. Valdez** (Chile), speaking on behalf of the members of the Common Market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR), and also Bolivia and Chile, said that questions of the peaceful uses of outer space were of particular significance on the threshold of the new millennium, since space technology had become an instrument of indisputable value in the daily lives of most of the inhabitants of the planet. In that connection, it was more urgent than ever to make progress on the legal and ethical questions of the peaceful uses of outer space.

34. The MERCOSUR countries had always supported the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, one of the basic goals of which was to ensure that the exploration and exploitation of outer space was carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all States, regardless of their level of economic and scientific development.

35. One of the basic documents in that field was the Outer Space Treaty, and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had a very important role to play in ensuring respect for the principles laid down in that Treaty and in the four other basic treaties on outer space matters, thereby strengthening the international foundations for the exploration and exploitation of outer space for peaceful purposes.

36. The MERCOSUR countries supported the work of the Legal Subcommittee, which should continue to accord special attention to the development of international space law, in particular the issues of the definition and delimitation of outer space and the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit. It should also continue its consideration of the problem of space debris and the adverse consequences for the environment of incomplete destruction of space debris when entering the dense layers of the atmosphere.

37. The MERCOSUR countries particularly stressed that the peaceful uses of outer space should be carried out for the benefit of all mankind and ensure special consideration for the interests of developing countries.

Space technology could yield tangible benefits to all inhabitants of the planet in terms of optimizing the use of natural resources and protecting the environment, improving the communications infrastructure, early warning and disaster management and other areas of vital significance for the development of human resources and eradication of poverty.

38. In order to ensure that those benefits were accessible to all countries regardless of their level of economic and technological development, international cooperation must be intensified in the relevant fields. The development of that cooperation must be based on the successful experience gained in the regions. In that regard, particular attention should be paid to the experience of holding outer space conferences in the Western hemisphere for all the Americas. The MERCOSUR countries particularly stressed the significance of the Declaration and Plan of Action of the fourth such conference, held in Cartagena de Indias (Colombia). Those documents reaffirmed the commitment of the countries of the region to promoting the development of space activities, the application and peaceful use of technologies derived therefrom, and cooperation as a vital mechanism for achieving those objectives on an equitable basis. In order to promote the achievement of those goals, support must be increased for national institutions engaged in implementing projects in the area of space science and technology, and the MERCOSUR countries had done much in that respect, particularly in terms of capacity-building in the area of telecommunications, disaster management, natural resources exploration, telemedicine and so forth.

39. Bearing in mind the steadily increasing role of civil society in the peaceful uses of outer space, the MERCOSUR countries noted with satisfaction that, in resolution 56/51, the General Assembly had provided for the inclusion in the agenda of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space of an item entitled "Space and society". States must cooperate with the private sector in the development of education in space science and technology and encourage the implementation of various projects.

40. The MERCOSUR countries supported the admission of Algeria to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The increase in the number of countries expressing a desire to participate in the Committee's work was further evidence of the importance and continued urgency of its work.

41. In conclusion, the MERCOSUR countries called upon the international community to continue its efforts to formulate a more equitable and stable legal and ethical framework for the peaceful uses of outer space and to further develop international cooperation in the interests of ensuring that the benefits of space technology were accessible to all mankind.

42. **Ms. Baaziz** (Algeria) commended the efforts of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III.

43. Ever since mankind had taken the first steps in the exploration of outer space, the question of international cooperation in outer space had been a vital issue, and in the future, the exploration and exploitation of outer space might serve the interests of development and the well-being of all peoples. Outer space had to be regarded as the common heritage of all mankind, and that meant that a firm commitment should be made to ensure that its exploration was conducted in a rational manner for the benefit of current and future generations. To that end, it was necessary to intensify international cooperation in the area of space research, so that developing countries could take part on an equal footing with developed countries. It was also necessary to thwart any attempts to militarize outer space by preventing an arms race and the emplacement of arms in outer space.

44. Throughout its existence as an independent State Algeria had paid a great deal of attention to space research and had made investments in the development of methods of remote sensing of the Earth and cartography. Satellite data in Algeria were applied in such areas as agriculture, hydrology, disaster prevention and management, environmental protection, territorial planning and the exploration and development of natural resources. In Algeria a number of technologies for remote sensing of the Earth were used, mainly for meteorological observations. The data obtained were also used for locust control.

45. By virtue of its geostationary position, Algeria participated in activities to ensure the operation of the international satellite navigation system, the international system for meteorological observations and the marine pollution emergency response system.

46. Desiring to make the maximum contribution to the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Algeria hoped that the members would

take a favourable view of its application to become a member of that Committee.

47. **Mr. Takahashi** (Japan) said that over the past year there had been significant developments in Japan's space-related activities. Following two successful launchings (in August 2001 and February 2002), in September 2002 a third vehicle had been successfully launched, delivering two satellites into orbit. Japan was planning to launch the advanced Earth observing satellite II (ADEOS-II), together with other satellites such as the Australian "Fedsat" satellite, by a fourth launch vehicle in 2002. The ADEOS-II satellite, an international cooperation project, was loaded with sensors developed by the United States of America, France and Japan; it would gather data on, inter alia, water vapour, precipitation and sea surface temperature for the purpose of promoting activities to alleviate the Earth's environmental problems.

48. Japan believed that the highly reliable H-IIA launch vehicle and the ADEOS-II satellite would make a major contribution to the peaceful development of outer space for the benefit of mankind.

49. Japan strongly believed that the benefits of space activities should be made available to people everywhere not only those living in countries that conducted such activities. For that reason, Japan was engaged in efforts to promote the use of outer space, particularly in the Asia and Pacific region. For example, it was successfully pursuing a joint experimental project in the region to demonstrate the potential of satellite communications in such areas as education, medicine and scientific research. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development Japan had advocated the use of satellite technologies for developing countries to address environmental issues and promote sustainable development. That view was reflected in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit.

50. Japan was determined to participate actively in the implementation of the recommendations of the Vienna Declaration adopted at UNISPACE III. As noted in the report of the Secretary-General, achieving the goals of UNISPACE III would also make important contributions to achieving some of the goals identified in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/57/213, para. 42). Japan was now serving as chair of the action team for item 17, on enhancing capacity-building through the development of human and budgetary resources. Furthermore, Japan would actively participate in the work of other action teams which would provide useful input to the working group established to prepare the report to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session.

51. In that connection, his delegation expressed the hope that the discussion on the composition of the bureau of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space would be concluded in the near future and that the principles of regional rotation and consensus, which were necessary for the smooth conduct of the work of the United Nations, including the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III, would be respected.

52. **Mr. Wimmer** (Austria) recalled that at its past session the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had agreed that intersessional informal consultations on the composition of the bureaux of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies for the third term would be held with a view to reaching consensus before the forty-sixth session of the Committee, and that Austria would report on the results of the consultations at the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly. Accordingly, Austria had convened and facilitated a number of informal consultations, including meetings of the members of that Committee and the chairs of the regional groups, as well as individual meetings with the chairpersons of the regional groups and members of the Committee who had expressed an interest in sharing their views.

53. The consultations had been guided by a spirit of responsibility and flexibility. He wished to mention, in particular, the efforts made by the African and Latin American groups. There had also been an emerging consensus that the solution to the current question regarding the officers of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should lead to a strengthened common understanding of the interpretation of the rules regarding the composition of the bureaux of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies. Austria was committed to lead the consultation process to a successful conclusion and to make a positive contribution with regard to the future of the Committee.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.

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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

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Chairman: Mr. Maitland (South Africa)

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Agenda item 75: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*)

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02-62724 (E)
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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 75: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*) (A/57/20 and A/57/213)

1. **Mr. Requeijo Gual** (Cuba) said that outer space activities were having a growing impact on all aspects of human life. Fascination for outer space had stimulated the creativity of millions of people, encouraging the development of new technologies to improve people's standard of living. Satellite meteorological observation, in particular, had helped improve weather forecasts, decrease the number of victims of natural disasters as well as the damage caused, and prevent the devastating effects of climate change.

2. Cuba wished to reiterate that outer space must remain the common heritage of mankind, in accordance with three basic principles which must govern the activities of States in the exploration and use of outer space.

3. First was the need to preserve outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes, while promoting international cooperation and stimulating the economic growth of all countries in the interests of real sustainable development which must include the necessary transfer of advanced space technology from the most developed countries in that field towards the less developed. In that connection, Cuba opposed any attempt to amend the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space that did not take account of the interests of all States, particularly the developing countries.

4. Secondly, Cuba emphatically rejected plans to unleash an arms race in outer space, especially considering new military doctrines proposing the development and deployment in outer space of new and expensive means of destruction in order to establish the hegemony of the most powerful over the rest of the inhabitants of the planet. In that regard, his delegation wished to reiterate its deep concern about the fact that some nuclear Powers which had space capability were continuing to block negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on the formulation of an international instrument to prevent an arms race in outer space. To that end, it was vitally important, as a first practical step, to establish a moratorium on the deployment of weapons in outer space, until the international community reached agreement on the issue.

5. Thirdly, his delegation agreed that the existing legal regime governing the use of outer space was insufficient to prevent such an arms race and considered that new mechanisms were urgently needed in order to ensure adequate monitoring and verification of the implementation of space law.

6. Cuba welcomed the strengthening of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its two functional subcommittees through a broadening of its membership, and fully supported the applications of Algeria and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for membership in the Committee.

7. Cuba attached great importance to the development of strategies aimed at minimizing the negative consequences of space debris. More attention must also be given to the problem of collisions of space objects, including those with nuclear power sources on board, and to defining the responsibility of their owners.

8. Cuba wished to reiterate the importance of strengthening international and regional cooperation for the development of space research. Such cooperation could not be limited to a small group of developed countries. It was vital to make maximum use of space technologies to promote human development, protect the environment and ensure real sustainable development in an atmosphere of peace and prosperity for the benefit of all mankind. Cuba was prepared to do all it could to contribute to such efforts.

9. **Mr. Tarasenko** (Russian Federation) said that bearing in mind Article 13 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Russian Federation favoured the development of a single comprehensive convention on space law, since it was only in formulating such an instrument that mutually acceptable solutions could be found to issues not settled by consensus and the status as legally binding norms of various principles laid down in documents of a recommendatory nature could be established. The formulation of such a convention would also allow for the clarification of a number of provisions in the basic space treaties in view of the diversification of space activities.

10. The Russian Federation considered that developments in the international community's exploration and use of outer space pointed to the need

to resume discussions on the establishment of a world space organization. The outcome of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) reflected the broad scale of the tasks facing the international community in that area.

11. He wished to stress that outer space must not become a source of new threats to mankind. On the contrary, it must and should help the international community respond to new challenges and threats.

12. In April 2001, Moscow had been the venue for an international conference to prevent the militarization of outer space, entitled "Space without weapons: an arena for peaceful cooperation in the twenty-first century". The Russian Federation believed that that dictum should be translated into reality and was prepared to undertake immediate practical steps to that end.

13. At the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the Russian Federation had proposed that the work should begin on a comprehensive agreement on the non-deployment of weapons in outer space and on the non-use or threat of force against space objects, the first step being the establishment of a moratorium on deploying weapons in outer space. The Russian Federation was prepared to enter into such a commitment immediately if other major space-faring countries joined such a moratorium.

14. Russian initiatives introduced at the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly had led to a Russian-Chinese working paper on possible elements for a future international legal agreement on the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space (CD/1679).

15. Recently the Russian Federation had put forward a new initiative aimed at enhancing transparency and trust in the sphere of outer space, having declared its readiness to provide timely information on planned launches of space objects, including their purpose and basic parameters.

16. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the new opportunities that were emerging for outer space exploration would be developed for the benefit of peace, international security and cooperation, and in the interests of the sustainable development of all mankind.

17. **Mr. Sherba** (Ukraine) said that his country attached great importance to the role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and took note with appreciation of its report and recommendations.

18. In 2002, natural disasters had inflicted immense damage in Europe and other regions of the world. Many potential disasters that could threaten the very existence of human civilization were yet to be studied. There was also a need to develop more effective measures to control space debris and achieve a deeper understanding of the effects of solar activity on human life. International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space was become increasingly important for meeting such challenges.

19. As one of the leading space-faring countries, Ukraine had always supported the efforts of the United Nations in promoting global dialogue on the most important issues relating to outer space. His delegation fully supported the recommendation by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space that regional centres for space science and technology education should be established on the basis of affiliation with the United Nations.

20. In 2002, 10 per cent of space launches throughout the world had been carried out with the aid of Ukrainian launch vehicles. Ukraine was prepared to continue to offer its capabilities for the implementation of joint space projects. Examples of cooperation on outer space included the use of Ukrainian launch vehicles for the "Sea Launch" and other satellite launch projects, the use of a space research centre in Evpatoria for the tracking of spacecraft under several international projects, the implementation of the Russian-Ukrainian project to develop the "Sich-1M" satellite and the preparation of a multi-volume analytical treatise on international space law.

21. This delegation noted with satisfaction that in accordance with General Assembly resolution 56/51 of 10 December 2001, the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had considered the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment and the preliminary draft Protocol on Matters Specific to Space Assets. Those instruments had the potential to significantly facilitate the development of commercial activities in outer space. His delegation favoured retention of the item on the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee at its forty-second session to be held in 2003.

22. His delegation shared the view that the Legal Subcommittee should consider the issue of the

appropriateness and desirability of drafting a universal comprehensive convention on international space law. A proposal to that effect had already been submitted to the Subcommittee by China, Greece and the Russian Federation (A/AC.105/C.2/L.236). His delegation believed that such an instrument would help fill lacunae within the current international space law system and that the drafting of the convention would prompt the Subcommittee to adequately address the legal implications of the rapid advances in modern space activity.

23. His delegation believed that the legal aspects of space debris removal deserved further attention by the Legal Subcommittee. It highly appreciated the analysis carried out by the European Centre for Space Law, which could serve as a starting point for further discussion within the Legal Subcommittee.

24. In conclusion, he wished to reiterate the continued commitment of Ukraine to the strengthening and expansion of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space so that its benefits would serve to improve the well-being of all mankind.

25. **Mr. Suman** (India) said that India was pleased to note the progress achieved by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space at its forty-fifth session, including its success in recent years in facilitating international cooperation in matters relating to outer space.

26. India remained convinced that the peaceful applications of space exploration had great potential to contribute to progress in all countries, in particular developing countries.

27. In its report, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had noted that the beneficial applications of space exploration in a wide variety of areas had enormous relevance for human development and that their wider adoption would strengthen the goal of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes. India fully concurred with that conclusion.

28. The Committee had achieved notable progress in its work on the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III. A working group had been established to prepare the relevant report for submission to the General Assembly; in that connection, India supported the recommendation that a separate item entitled "Review of the implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration of Peaceful Uses of Outer Space" should be included in the agenda of the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session.

29. India was satisfied with the work of the Committee's two subcommittees and the activities that had been carried out by the United Nations Programme on Space Applications in spite of budgetary constraints. India also fully supported the priority themes of the activities of the Programme.

30. Turning to the concrete achievements of the Indian space programme over the past year, he noted that international cooperation had been a vital component. In particular, India had signed the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters; a United Nations Workshop on Satellite-Aided Search and Rescue had been jointly organized in Bangalore with the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs; and the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific continued to make good progress, benefiting 340 scholars from 39 countries.

31. Recognizing that space technology could play a vital role in national development, India was making focused efforts to ensure its development and application, while maintaining a strong commitment to its peaceful use and to international cooperation. His delegation believed that the United Nations, through the Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, would continue to further enhance international cooperation in that vital area.

32. **Mr. Mohamed** (Malaysia) said that his country fully supported the strategy of promoting the peaceful uses of outer space to attain the goals of development, particularly in developing countries, in such areas as strengthening communications infrastructure, disaster management, education, agriculture, environmental protection and natural resource management, and remained committed to the advancement and development of space technology. That commitment was demonstrated, in particular, by the inclusion of space science in the Third Malaysian Outline Perspective Plan as one of the key areas of activity for the building of a knowledge-based society.

33. Under the National Remote Sensing Programme, Malaysia was implementing a National Resources and Environment Management project and had also embarked on the construction of a ground receiving station, which would receive real-time satellite data.

34. Noting the need to prevent the militarization and weaponization of outer space through the conclusion of new treaties, he expressed concern about certain ongoing research and testing of outer space weaponry, which could threaten social and economic progress and have a negative impact on the established international security structure.

35. In line with its support for regional and interregional cooperation in space science and technology, Malaysia was making its applications available to all countries. Malaysia was also contributing to international cooperation through the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. Since 1990, the Malaysian Centre for Remote Sensing had implemented a range of bilateral and multilateral programmes for the transfer of Malaysian microwave technologies.

36. In order to achieve greater cost-effectiveness in the use of capacity for launching spacecraft into near-equatorial orbit, Malaysia was developing, in collaboration with the United States of America, a Small Payload Orbit Transfer (SPORT) vehicle prototype. The use of such vehicles would enable more frequent launches and, taking into account the higher reliability of such launch vehicles, the probability of success would be increased and insurance costs reduced. The launching of the first such vehicle, which had been under development for nearly two years, was scheduled for the end of 2003.

37. In view of the successful launching of the first regional telecommunication satellites, MEASAT-1 and -2, which were providing optimum coverage for the East Asian region, Malaysia was planning to launch another four satellites of that series. Construction of MEASAT-3 had already begun; it would represent a new generation of satellites with higher capacity than the previous ones.

38. Malaysia welcomed the efforts to establish regional centres for space science and technology education in academic institutions in developing countries. In that connection, Malaysia planned to organize appropriate educational programmes and was already in the process of manufacturing a mobile observatory to be used for educational and practical purposes.

39. Malaysia was also developing an educational portal (web site) to assist teachers of astronomy and students. In addition to a virtual astronomy laboratory, the portal would also offer virtual astronomy classes with tutorials and examination papers.

40. Lastly, he noted that Malaysia would continue to support international cooperation in all areas of activity of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space while at the same time rigorously pursuing its efforts to develop its own indigenous capability.

41. **Mr. El-Farnawany** (Egypt) thanked the Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for the information he had provided on the Committee's efforts to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III. The Committee's leading role in strengthening international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space in the interests of humankind should be recognized. The Committee's work over the past four decades in the scientific, technical and legal fields and the fundamental principles it had elaborated with a view to guaranteeing the use of outer space by all countries without any discrimination and exclusively for peaceful purposes aroused a sense of pride.

42. The efforts of the Legal Subcommittee to assess the status of implementation of the five treaties governing the regime and setting out the legal principles for the use of outer space also inspired optimism.

43. Guided by its wish to promote the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III and the Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development, Egypt had participated in the activities of four action teams. His delegation supported the call for the inclusion in the agenda of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly of a new item on the review of the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III.

44. His delegation wished to underscore the importance of using space technologies in the interests of the developing and least developed countries in order to facilitate the implementation of their development plans. Egypt endorsed the statement made by the Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space at the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

45. Desiring to promote the strengthening of the capacity of developing countries in scientific research and the use of space technologies, his delegation called on Member States to respond constructively to the

recommendation that funds should be provided to cover the costs for the least developed countries of participating in the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies (see A/57/20, para. 33).

46. Egypt had established a council for space science and technology, which was entrusted with elaborating a national programme for the application of space technologies in the following areas: using remote sensing for the exploration of desert zones; establishing a scientific base in Egypt; drawing on various aspects of international cooperation with a view to developing a space programme in Egypt; and utilizing the achievements of space science and technology in the interests of developing various branches of the national economy.

47. Egypt wished to align itself with those countries that had expressed support for the admission of Algeria and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya as members of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

48. **Ms. Rusu** (Romania) said that her delegation, while fully endorsing the statement made by the representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union, wished to highlight some significant developments in Romania's national space activities. In September 2001, the Romanian Space Agency had initiated a series of new projects relating to space and aerospace policy and infrastructure, space exploration, space applications, aerospace technologies and spin-offs. By the end of 2002, an advanced space and aerospace technology park, housing a whole range of research and industrial organizations, would be established in Bucharest. In spring 2002, several centres of excellence in space science and applications, including high-energy astrophysics, parallel computing, complex fluids in microgravity, precision agriculture, and space applications in medicine and health monitoring, had been established. Another example of Romania's commitment to international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space was the participation of Romanian scientists in the development of several international space missions in collaboration with the European Space Agency (ESA), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration of the United States of America and the National Space Development Agency of Japan.

49. Using space communications, earth observation data and global navigation satellite systems, Romania had achieved significant success in applied fields, including seismic risk assessment in the area of Bucharest, disaster management, telemedicine and the use of radar interferometry for the study of the Black Sea coast. She highlighted the cooperation in precision agriculture with the National Centre for Space Studies of France.

50. During the past year, Romania had continued to strengthen cooperation with ESA with a view to deeper integration of its space research and industrial capabilities in European programmes. Her Government was participating directly in the implementation of the fifth framework programme of the European Commission and intended to submit a number of project proposals for the sixth framework programme, particularly with respect to such European initiatives as Galileo and Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES).

51. Romania paid the closest attention to providing support to developing countries in the use of space applications, so that achievements in the fields of space science and technology could be used for the benefit of all humankind. Romanian experts, in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, had assisted Azerbaijan in developing its own land information system and had provided consultancy services to Angola in connection with the organization of events related to the total solar eclipse in 2001.

52. Recognizing that space applications played an important role in achieving sustainable development in all countries and regions of the world, Romania had taken part in a symposium entitled "Space technology provides solutions for sustainable development", organized by the United Nations and ESA in South Africa in August 2002.

53. Lastly, she said that Romania continued to pay special attention to the expansion of international and regional cooperation in space activities. In that connection, she noted that the Network for Education and Research in Space, Science and Technology for Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe could make a major contribution to ensuring stability and development in the whole region. Recognizing the importance of education in space science and technology, the Romanian Space Agency had developed for the Network a one-year academic programme.

54. **Mr. Chaudhry** (Pakistan), noting with satisfaction the progress made in implementing the

recommendations of UNISPACE III, explained his delegation's position on a number of issues considered by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. With regard to maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes, he said that the militarization of outer space was a dangerous trend that needed to be stopped at all costs. That issue fell within the competence of the Committee, since military activities seriously affected international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and uses of outer space. Countries with significant space capabilities could contribute to the achievement of the collective goal of preventing an arms race in outer space. In that connection, he noted the need to conclude a comprehensive convention to prevent an arms race in outer space and expressed support for the Sino-Russian draft of possible elements of a future international treaty against the deployment of weapons in outer space, which had been circulated at the session of the Conference on Disarmament in 2002.

55. He emphasized the importance of equitable access to the geostationary orbit for all countries, particularly developing countries, bearing in mind their requirements and their limited capacity in terms of resources and technology. In his view, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was the appropriate body for further discussion of that issue with a view to the development of legal and technical concepts relating to the geostationary orbit. In addition to the divisive issue of the rights of States to the geostationary orbit, the related legal and technical issues required further examination. The issue of access to the geostationary orbit should also be discussed in coordination with the conference of the International Telecommunication Union.

56. Pakistan also attached great importance to the definition and delimitation of outer space in view of the need to distinguish between outer space and airspace and to ensure greater legal certainty in space law. A major breakthrough in that area had been the approval by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space of a revised questionnaire on possible legal issues with respect to aerospace objects. The questionnaire would help to achieve a better understanding of the definition and delimitation of outer space.

57. Turning to the issue of remote sensing, he said that the Principles Relating to Remote Sensing of the Earth from Space, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/65 of 3 December 1986, set out guidelines for remote sensing and provided safeguards against the abuse of remote sensing to the detriment of the interests of other States. Pakistan supported the proposed incorporation of the Principles in a more binding legal instrument. It also wished to underscore the need to give developing countries access to remote sensing data.

58. Pakistan remained concerned about the issue of space debris. He welcomed the consideration of a report on the International Satellite System for Search and Rescue and drew attention to the possibility of using outer space to establish communication infrastructures for early warning systems and to mitigate the effects of natural disasters.

59. All countries must have the opportunity to utilize the benefits of space science and technology, and it was therefore necessary to intensify efforts to disseminate satellite data and to provide assistance in training specialists. In that connection, he stressed the need to increase voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for the United Nations Programme on Space Applications.

60. Lastly, he reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to the implementation of the Vienna Declaration with a view to promoting among Member States cooperation in space science and technology and the sharing of the benefits of outer space research without any discrimination.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.

United Nations A/C.4/57/SR.9

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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 9th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 9 October 2002, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Maitland ..... (South Africa)

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Agenda item 75: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 75: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*) (A/57/20 and A/57/213; A/C.4/57/L.5)

1. **Mr. Hodgkins** (United States of America) said that, over the past four decades, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had recorded a number of significant achievements in promoting international space cooperation. However, the Committee was not, and must not become, one of the multilateral mechanisms in which disarmament issues were discussed. It had been established by General Assembly resolution 1348 (XIII) of 13 December 1958 as the Assembly's only standing body for the consideration of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. There were such forums as the First Committee of the General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament to deal with the disarmament aspects of outer space.

2. The Committee had played a notable role in advancing space cooperation and provided a unique opportunity for the exchange of information among developed and developing countries on the latest developments in the use and exploration of outer space. In his delegation's view, there were tangible opportunities to enhance international cooperation in line with the Committee's mandate.

3. The recent sessions of the Committee and its subcommittees were a clear example. His delegation was particularly encouraged by the substantial progress made in the work of the action teams established to implement the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III). There had been an extremely interesting exchange of views on the spin-off benefits of space exploration and the strengthening of the role of the Committee in promoting international cooperation to ensure that outer space was maintained for peaceful purposes. His delegation was also pleased to note that the Committee had considered a new item entitled "Space and society", as well as international cooperation in the activities of the International Satellite System for Search and Rescue (COSPAS-SARSAT), which was marking its twentieth anniversary in 2002. During that period, COSPAS-SARSAT had defined the technical characteristics of emergency beacons to help ensure the use of one common standard worldwide; its space segment had been expanded to include instruments in the geostationary orbit, which now provided almost instantaneous alerts; the programme's membership had been expanded and now included 34 States in all regions of the world.

4. His delegation noted, in particular, the successes of the Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space, especially its work on launch approval processes for space nuclear systems and on potential practical applications of that technology in the future.

5. Another priority topic for his delegation was space debris. It was pleased to note that the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee had reached a consensus on proposed debris mitigation guidelines.

6. The work of the Legal Subcommittee in the field of space law had been extraordinarily successful. Much of that success was due to its ability to focus on practical problems and its efforts to address any such problems through a consensus-based and results-oriented approach. At its recent session, the Subcommittee had, inter alia, completed the multi-year work plan for the review of the concept of the "launching state"; the related report (A/AC.105/768) deserved special praise. The Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (the Outer Space Treaty), which was marking its thirty-fifth anniversary in 2002, had stood the test of time; its provisions had lost none of their importance and relevance. Taking into account the recent significant increase in the scale of commercial use of outer space, the progress made in the work on the draft protocol to the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment on matters specific to space assets seemed promising.

7. At the recent session of the Legal Subcommittee, his delegation had emphasized that all States must focus on the domestic implementation of the outer space treaties. In that connection, the United States had taken a number of measures to upgrade its national registry of space objects so that it was accessible on the Internet and could be updated electronically. It had also taken measures to clarify the domestic criteria for including space objects in the national register. That step was intended to ensure that both domestic and

foreign owners and operators of space objects had a clear understanding of the circumstances in which space objects were or were not registered by the United States.

8. Other States should take measures to clarify their registration practice in a similar manner; that would improve overall international practice, which would be to the benefit of all. The promotion of increased international cooperation in the registration of space objects might be an appropriate area of activity for the Legal Subcommittee and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs.

9. **Mr. Fallouh** (Syrian Arab Republic) noted the efforts of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III, the Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development and the resolutions and recommendations on ways and means of ensuring full participation by developing countries in the exploration and use of outer space.

10. The flight by a Syrian astronaut and the establishment of a national body on remote sensing of the Earth demonstrated the importance that the Syrian Arab Republic attached to its participation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

11. His delegation noted the generally positive international trends in the peaceful uses of outer space, particularly in connection with the enhancement of the economic and humanitarian situation in developing countries. A peaceful cosmos required that the efforts of the international community to stop the illicit use of outer space, prevent its militarization and avert an arms race in space should be based on clear legal mandates, concepts and documents, which should be elaborated on a continuous basis.

12. His delegation welcomed the efforts made by some countries to reduce spending on military space activities and to use the savings for development and environmental protection and to seek solutions to serious global economic, environmental and health problems. However, it noted with alarm the continued implementation of some programmes that were leading to the militarization of outer space the goals of which were incompatible with international peace and development.

13. He noted that, in order to avoid collisions, more attention should be paid to the problem of space debris, particularly where spacecraft equipped with nuclear power sources or having nuclear components were concerned. Countries that had satellites with nuclear units on board had a special responsibility to provide sufficiently full information on their satellites, the refuelling methods, the composition of their components and the safety measures in place.

14. Concerning the enlargement of the membership of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, his delegation supported the applications of Algeria and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to become members of the Committee.

15. Lastly, he expressed the hope that the accomplishment of the goals set and the implementation of the resolutions and principles adopted would lead to the enhancement of efforts in the field of the peaceful uses of outer space and contribute to the strengthening of stability, peace and justice throughout the world.

16. **Mr. Elashi** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should be given due credit for the work it had done, which was reflected in its report. Outer space and the peaceful uses of outer space were of great interest to the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, given the enormous importance, particularly for developing countries, of utilizing outer space for socio-economic development, the improvement of the communications infrastructure, early warning systems, environmental protection and the exploitation of natural resources. In that connection, there was a need to initiate cooperation, within the United Nations system, in the application of space technologies and scientific know-how that could help to eliminate the obstacles to sustainable development.

17. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had been following achievements in space science for more than 10 years. It had opened a remote sensing centre to address various problems, including desertification and the depletion of unconfined groundwater. The scientific methods and technologies developed were made available to international and regional organizations.

18. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had applied to participate in the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and trusted that its application would receive favourable consideration. Should it became a member of the Committee, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya would contribute to the

strengthening of the role of the African countries. In addition, that would enable geographical balance to be re-established within the Committee's membership.

19. With regard to the issue of an arms race in space, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya considered outer space to be a common good, which should therefore be used in the interests of all humankind, for its development and prosperity. It called on all States Members of the United Nations to adopt such conventions and laws as would preclude the use of outer space for military purposes.

20. **Mr. Su** Wei (China) said that, at its forty-fifth session, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had discussed, as a priority item, ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes. His Government had always considered that the development and use of outer space should fully serve the cause of peace, and it believed that there was a need to conclude binding international instruments on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

21. At the recent session of the Committee, there had been serious and in-depth discussion of the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment and the preliminary draft protocol on matters specific to space assets. His delegation believed that the proposed space asset financing, collateral and guarantee system should be based on the provisions of the Outer Space Treaty. It supported the continuation of deliberations on that item and the conduct of an in-depth study on the specific approaches to reconciling the draft protocol and the currently applicable space law.

22. His delegation valued highly the support provided by the countries concerned and by international organizations to the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, which made a useful contribution to the promotion and coordination of space activities. In addition, his Government attached great importance to the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III. China, which had presided for one year over the action team responsible for natural disaster reduction and management, had worked effectively with Canada and France on the implementation of the action plan.

23. Concerning the achievements in China's aeronautical industry over the past year, he said that, on 25 March 2002, China had launched the unmanned spacecraft Shenzhou 3, which had returned successfully to Earth on 1 April 2002. The planned experiments had been completed, marking a sound step forward in the field of manned space technology. On 15 May 2002, the carrier rocket Long March-4B had been successfully launched, sending two satellites into orbit simultaneously: China's first oceanographic satellite Haiyang-1 and the meteorological satellite Fengyun-1D. The launch had been the sixty-seventh using carrier rockets of the Long March series and the thirteenth successful launch of two satellites using one rocket. Since 1996, there had been 25 launches of such rockets, the safety and reliability of which had reached world-class standards.

24. Currently, satellites of various kinds developed by China were being widely used in such fields as the economy, science and technology, culture and defence, generating social and economic benefits. In order to promote sustainable development, his Government had incorporated space technology in the national development strategy.

25. China, which was committed to the idea that international cooperation in outer space should be based on mutual benefit and mutual complementarity, had concluded intergovernmental and interdepartmental agreements with many countries. On 1 January 2002, his Government had formally established the Multilateral Space Cooperation Secretariat for the Asia and Pacific Region. It would continue to expand its cooperation in outer space matters.

26. **Ms. Olivera** (Mexico) said that the appropriate use of outer space opened up many possibilities for furthering human development and overcoming key problems in various fields. The members of the international community should take a responsible approach to that task and, in addressing it, should make maximum use of the existing coordination bodies and mechanisms. She noted that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subcommittees continued to analyse the implementation of measures to improve the communications infrastructure, education, agriculture, environmental protection and the rational use of natural resources in the interests of human development.

27. In her delegation's view, UNISPACE III gave the Committee an opportunity to reorient its activities in the light of the important international commitments entered into by Member States in recent years. First and foremost, there was a need for active efforts to

ensure that achievements in the fields of space science and technology furthered the successful and comprehensive attainment of the goals of such major United Nations conferences as the Millennium Summit, the Doha Ministerial Conference, the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. She expressed satisfaction at the first steps taken by the Committee, the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities towards addressing those ambitious tasks. The Committee's efforts should be directed towards the implementation of practical measures to promote the formation of stable societies, for example, by solving environmental problems, preventing natural disasters, remedying the shortage of water resources, foodstuffs and energy, and developing the education system.

28. Her delegation, which was fully prepared to participate in the work of the Committee and to cooperate with the relevant United Nations bodies, was making an active contribution to the work of the action teams on a worldwide environmental monitoring strategy and on the rational use of natural resources.

29. In her delegation's view, regional cooperation in science and technology played an important role in, and made a substantial contribution to, the work of the Committee. In that connection, she noted the successful conduct of the fourth Pan-American Space Conference, the main outcome of which had been the adoption of a recommendation on the establishment of a regional coordination mechanism for space affairs, which was called on to facilitate the creation of a regional agency for expanding mutual assistance and coordination among the countries of the region in space science and technology. The Conference had also adopted a plan of action for the development of cooperation and coordination among regional programmes and projects.

30. She signalled, as a special achievement, the establishment of the Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, the board of governors of which, at its meetings in 2002 in Mexico and Brazil, had adopted important decisions on the composition and functioning of the leadership of the Centre's departments in both countries and had approved an agreement on the headquarters of the Centre.

31. **The Chairman** drew attention to draft resolution A/C.4/57/L.5 on the item under consideration. He announced that there would be a brief suspension to give members of the Committee time to familiarize themselves with the text of the draft resolution, which had only just been circulated.

The meeting was suspended at 10.45 a.m. and resumed at 10.55 a.m.

32. **The Chairman** suggested that, since the draft resolution had already been considered for two days in a working group, the members of the Committee should not, in the current instance, apply rule 120 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and should take action on the draft resolution at the current meeting.

33. *It was so decided.*

34. **Mr. Gonzalez Aninat** (Chile) introduced draft resolution A/C.4/57/L.5 on the item under consideration. Noting that the text of the draft resolution was very similar to that of the previous year's resolution, he explained the differences between the two texts.

35. In the preamble, a few words had been added to stress the importance of article IV of the Outer Space Treaty. Paragraphs 3 to 11, 15 to 21 and 42 to 46 reflected the recommendations of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space concerning its own work and that of its subcommittees in 2003. Paragraph 26 called on Member States to provide full support to the action teams established by the Committee to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III. Paragraph 28 referred to the preparations that the Committee had initiated for the review by the General Assembly in 2004 of the progress made in the implementing those recommendations, while paragraph 29 reflected the agreement that a separate item devoted to that review should be included in the agenda of the Assembly at its fifty-ninth session.

36. Paragraph 38 urged entities of the United Nations system to examine how space science and technology could contribute to the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Paragraph 45 recognized the achievements of COSPAS-SARSAT.

37. Paragraphs 12 to 14 concerned the composition of the bureaux of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subsidiary bodies. Paragraph 41 reflected the Committee's decision to grant observer status to additional organizations. Paragraphs 39

and 40 reflected the agreement reached on the membership of the Committee. He thanked all those who had contributed to the formulation of the latter two paragraphs.

38. He expressed the hope that, in accordance with established practice, the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote.

39. **The Chairman** announced that he had been informed by the Secretariat that the adoption of the draft resolution would have no programme budget implications.

40. **Mr. Assaf** (Lebanon) noted that, in the Arabic version of draft resolution A/C.4/57/L.5, paragraphs 38 to 46 had been printed twice, while paragraphs 47 to 49 were missing.

41. **Mr. Brosseau** (France) pointed out that, in the French version of the document, in the third line of the second preambular paragraph, the word "*patrimoine*" was used, whereas the word "*apanage*" should have been used, as in article I of the Outer Space Treaty.

42. **The Chairman** said that he took it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft resolution, as orally revised, without a vote.

43. *Draft resolution A/C.4/57/L.5, as orally revised, was adopted.*

44. **Mr. Yahya** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) congratulated Algeria on becoming a member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. There had been only one vacancy in the Committee, but there was not and could not be any rivalry between Algeria and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya would, in any case, have made way for fraternal Algeria.

45. His delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution, but it was not entirely satisfied with the formulation of paragraph 40. It was to be hoped that, in 2004, a positive decision would be reached on the issue of the membership of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in the Committee.

46. **Mr. Djacta** (Algeria) thanked all those who had supported Algeria's becoming a member of the Committee. His delegation would strive to make a useful contribution to the work of the Committee. It considered that the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya should also become a member of the Committee and would continue to support it in its efforts to that end.

47. **The Chairman** announced that the Committee had thus concluded its consideration of the item.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.

United Nations A/C.4/57/SR.10

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 10th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 11 October 2002, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Maitland ..... (South Africa)

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Other matters

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02-63340 (E)

0263340

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 74: Effects of atomic radiation (A/57/46, A/C.4/57/L.7)

1. **The Chairman** drew Committee members' attention to the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (A/57/46) and to draft resolution A/C.4/57/L.7.

2. **Mr. Cordeiro** (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Common Market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR) and the associated countries Bolivia and Chile, said that the States members of MERCOSUR attached great importance to the work of the Scientific Committee and greatly appreciated the scientific evaluations contained in its reports. The States members of MERCOSUR and the associated countries strongly believed that atomic energy should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes in the interest of socio-economic development.

3. Introducing the report of the Scientific Committee, in his capacity as Chairman, he drew attention to the Scientific Committee's new programme of work adopted in 2001, and expressed satisfaction at the establishment of official collaboration between the Committee and scientists in Belarus and Ukraine.

4. Every year, new scientific data emerged on radiation from both natural and man-made sources. The task of collecting, monitoring and disseminating such information was thus becoming increasingly relevant. In that connection, the Scientific Committee's budget crisis gave cause for serious concern. Its budgetary resources for the 2002-2003 biennium were not sufficient to cover assistance to the Secretariat for the preparation of documents, the servicing of expert meetings or payment for consultancy services. In view of that situation and taking into account the Scientific Committee's mandate laid down in paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 56/50 of 10 December 2001, it was to be hoped that the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) would be sensitive to that concern and give the Scientific Committee an opportunity to resume its normal activities in the near future.

5. Introducing draft resolution A/C.4/57/L.7, which, to a great extent, reiterated the previous year's resolution on that item, he drew attention to some additions. In particular, the preamble took note that some Member States had expressed interest in becoming members of the Committee and also noted with concern that, owing to insufficient resources, the Committee had been unable to hold a regular session in 2002. Two new paragraphs of the resolution reflected the Scientific Committee's need for adequate resources. One urged UNEP to strengthen the funding of the Scientific Committee so that the Committee could discharge the responsibilities and mandate entrusted to it; the other emphasized the need for holding regular sessions of the Scientific Committee on an annual basis.

6. In conclusion, he said that Austria, Singapore and Thailand wished to become sponsors of the draft resolution and expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus, as it had been in previous years.

7. **Mr. Lauridsen** (Denmark) speaking on behalf of the European Union and the associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey and in addition, the European Free Trade Association country member of the European Economic Area, Iceland, noted that the Scientific Committee, the principal international body in its field, played a pre-eminent role in radiation risk assessment worldwide and delivered state-of-the-art reports, which were widely used for drafting national and international standards to protect populations against the effects of atomic radiation.

8. The European Union fully supported the work programme of the Scientific Committee, particularly with regard to the studies on the effects of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant and initiatives to examine the effects of radiation on the environment. The European Union welcomed the dissemination of information on the Scientific Committee's work over the Internet.

9. Expressing support for the Scientific Committee's plans for its future activities in the area of scientific review and assessment, he said that the European Union believed that the Scientific Committee's budget crisis should be resolved as quickly as possible; if it continued, it might affect the work of other international organizations.

10. The European Union fully supported the Scientific Committee, which, by virtue of its scientific authority, was making an essential and independent

contribution to evaluating the risks and effects of radiation.

11. **Mr. Suman** (India) said that, recognizing the importance and significance of the work of the Scientific Committee, his country, as in previous years, was a sponsor of the draft resolution on the item under consideration.

12. It was a matter of concern that, owing to budgetary difficulties, the Scientific Committee had been unable to meet in 2002 to carry out its programme of work endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/50. Its current budget was just half of what it had been in 1992-1993, and two thirds of its 1994-1995 budget. The quality of the professional and competent consultants recruited by the Committee must not be compromised.

13. New information had surfaced on DNA mutation in populations living in the Semipalatinsk area, where atomic weapons tests had been carried out in the 1950s, and in the children of recovery workers at Chernobyl. In its 2001 report, the Scientific Committee had concluded that there was no evidence of hereditary disease in populations exposed to radiation; however, molecular data now suggested the possibility of mutations at the DNA level which could lead to hereditary disease. It was important to analyse rapidly accumulating new data, which the Scientific Committee was eminently competent to do.

14. The new programme of the Scientific Committee envisaged a new "from-sources-to-effects" approach not only in continuing its assessment of the effects of the Chernobyl accident but also with respect to radon in homes and workplaces, radioecology, cellular and molecular studies of tissues and organs and diseases other than cancer. Those efforts were in keeping with a deeper understanding of biological processes acquired through the use of the modern tools of genomics and proteonics.

15. India recognized that the global exposure of populations from natural and medical sources continued to be considerably larger than that caused by the fall-out of weapons testing, even at its peak in the 1960s. The new information emerging from studies of background radiation in India and elsewhere should be analysed by the Scientific Committee on a regular basis.

16. India called upon UNEP to recognize the importance of the Scientific Committee's work and its relevance to the objectives of UNEP, and to support it, not only by providing the additional funds requested for 2003, but also by ensuring sufficient allocations for forthcoming years.

17. **Ms. Kulik** (Ukraine) said that Ukraine attached particular significance to the activities of the Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR), since they related to the study of the radiological effects of the Chernobyl accident. In that connection, her delegation commended the intention of UNSCEAR to continue its studies of the disaster's effects on the population's health as a priority for its work. Ukraine also noted with satisfaction the close collaboration on Chernobyl between the Committee and scientists from the three affected countries.

18. Ukraine welcomed the Scientific Committee's plans for radiation risk assessments. Her delegation also noted with concern that insufficient resources could hinder the work of that Committee. It was imperative that a constructive solution to the current situation be found. The delegation of Ukraine supported measures to ensure that UNSCEAR would be able to discharge its important mandate effectively.

19. Ukraine reiterated its interest in becoming a member of the Scientific Committee. In light of the specific sphere of UNSCEAR activities, its work would benefit from inviting countries with expertise in atomic radiation to contribute to its activities as members. Ukraine had a significant scientific capacity in radiological research and unique knowledge and considerable experience in dealing with the effects of radiation. Her delegation was convinced that Ukraine could make a valuable contribution to the work of the Scientific Committee as a member. In that regard, it would greatly appreciate the support of Member States in its efforts to become a member.

20. **Mr. Takahashi** (Japan) said that his country was sponsoring the resolution, convinced that the efforts of the Scientific Committee to collect, structure and disseminate radiological information were essential in a world that was increasingly reliant on nuclear technology. He hoped that the resolution would be adopted by consensus.

21. By establishing a special advisory board under the Government's Nuclear Safety Commission, Japan had shown that it attached the highest priority to the

safe use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Furthermore, Japan had been conducting a survey, with the full cooperation of the Government of Kazakhstan, to assess the effects of radiation on the health of the people in the Semipalatinsk region.

22. Japan appreciated the scientific contributions by UNSCEAR to enhance atomic radiation safety and shared the budgetary concerns that its Chairperson had voiced in her letter to the Executive Director of UNEP. Japan hoped that UNEP would duly consider the budget request that UNSCEAR had recently submitted to it to enable the Scientific Committee to continue to work effectively.

23. **Mr. Ivanou** (Belarus) said that research on the effects of atomic radiation remained an important issue on the international agenda. The activities of the Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation were an important source of information in that regard.

24. The Republic of Belarus supported continued UNSCEAR activities in strict observance of the mandate entrusted to it under the relevant General Assembly resolutions. Objectivity, impartiality and the widest possible consideration of the views of all interested parties should be the guiding principles of its work. His delegation noted with regret that UNSCEAR had been unable to hold its regular session in 2002, and felt that the Scientific Committee, working in the interest of all Member States, should be able to fully discharge its mandate.

25. The Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster had put Belarus in a particular position with regard to the issues that fell within the remit of UNSCEAR. His country had acquired significant and unique expertise and experience regarding the effects of atomic radiation on human health and the environment.

26. Belarus officially declared that it was ready to completely discharge its functions as a fully fledged member of the Scientific Committee and that it was determined to make a unique and constructive contribution to help UNSCEAR implement its mandate. In that regard, Belarus counted on the General Assembly to consider the issue of expanding its membership in the near future.

27. **Mr. Requeijo Gual** (Cuba) said that the annual report of the Scientific Committee contained very valuable information on ionizing radiation sources and their effects on human beings and the environment. The scientific level of its reports had been high, which had enabled them to be used as background documentation for the adoption of national and international policies to protect populations against the effects of ionizing radiation. In that regard, the delegation of Cuba reaffirmed the importance that it attached to the work of the Scientific Committee, which it viewed as a source of specialized, objective and balanced information on matters within its competence.

28. The report under consideration contained a comprehensive review of the risks faced by the descendants of those who had been exposed to ionizing radiation and provided the means to take preventive actions to diminish the impact of diseases caused by inherited and environmental factors.

29. He hoped for a prompt resolution of its budget crisis so that the Scientific Committee might continue to carry out its important mandate and stressed the importance of continuing to strengthen cooperation between UNSCEAR and various United Nations agencies and institutions. Such collaboration should greatly benefit humanity through implementing technological developments in various spheres of activity, especially in health and environmental protection. Only broad and serious cooperation on the peaceful uses of atomic energy could eliminate the potential dangers of ionizing radiation.

Other matters

30. **The Chairman** said that the National Film Board of Canada had requested permission to film the proceedings of the Fourth Committee during its consideration of peacekeeping issues.

31. **Mr. Osei** (Ghana) said that his delegation did not object if the filming would be in keeping with the rules and practices adopted by the United Nations.

32. **The Chairman** said that, if there were no other remarks, he took it that the Committee wished to approve the request.

33. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.

United Nations A/C.4/57/SR.11

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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 11th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 15 October 2002, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Maitland ..... (South Africa)

Contents

Agenda item 74: Effects of atomic radiation (*continued*)

Agenda item 19: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (*continued*)

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02-63931 (E)
0263931

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 74: Effects of atomic radiation (*continued*) (A/57/46; A/C.4/57/L.7)

1. **Ms. Kabua** (Marshall Islands) said that the issue of the effects of atomic radiation was a particularly important one for her country because both the people and the environment had suffered greatly as a consequence of the nuclear weapons tests conducted by the United States on its territory in the 1940s and 1950s. More than 50 years later, the people still suffered from health effects, soil contamination still hampered the capacity for development, and the food chain still contained dangerously high radiation levels. After more than half a century, the persistence of toxic nuclear waste produced by the atomic tests created a problem that far exceeded the country's financial and scientific capabilities.

2. The Marshall Islands fully supported the activities of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, whose studies of effects from all sources were of great benefit to all Member States. Her delegation endorsed that Committee's new programme of work and fully supported its request that the General Assembly should reaffirm its support by directing the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to meet its obligations and provide it with adequate funds.

3. **Mr. Hidayat** (Indonesia), speaking on behalf of his own country and the other member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam, said that ASEAN welcomed the Scientific Committee's report (A/57/46) and attached great importance to its activities. It especially appreciated the work it was doing to assess the sources of atomic radiation and the role it had played in the establishment of radiation protection recommendations by the International Commission on Radiological Protection and in the formulation of the Basic Safety Standards by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Those standards were of benefit to all developing countries, especially the ASEAN member countries, which had adopted them for their own use.

4. Depleted uranium was a particularly dangerous source of radiation. While it had peaceful applications — as ballast in aircraft, radiation shields in medical equipment used for radiation therapy, or containers for the transport of radioactive materials — it was also very toxic both chemically and radiologically and could seriously damage organs like the kidneys and the lungs. ASEAN encouraged the Scientific Committee, in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO), UNEP and IAEA, to conduct further studies enabling a better assessment of the depleted uranium health risks and to study populations exposed to naturally elevated concentrations of uranium in drinking water.

5. In a world that was increasingly reliant on nuclear energy, safety standards for the protection of the environment were important, and information should be shared about the risks inherent in the operation of nuclear power plants and about the implementation of safeguards. In that connection ASEAN hoped that the Scientific Committee and IAEA would play complementary roles.

6. Lastly, ASEAN was concerned that for lack of adequate support funds, especially from UNEP, the Scientific Committee had been delayed in carrying out its programme of work. It therefore supported that Committee Chairperson's request for a reconsideration of the matter of funding by UNEP so that the Committee could conduct its work effectively and disseminate its findings properly.

7. **Mr. Sawadogo** (Burkina Faso) said that atomic radiation was a matter of serious concern to his country. Burkina Faso had established a Ministry of the Environment and Quality of Life which dealt, inter alia, with issues arising from the serious effects of atomic radiation. There was also a national branch of the IAEA. The Chernobyl crisis must not be forgotten, nor the dangers posed by other forms of radiation, especially from natural sources, as well as from exposure to X-rays and radionuclides used for medical diagnosis and treatment. His country's consumers' league had issued comments on the subject.

8. His delegation invited Member States, partner organizations, experts and universities to work together to understand and combat the harmful effects of atomic radiation. The Scientific Committee could not effectively discharge its mandate if it did not have sufficient funds. His delegation therefore urged UNEP

to continue providing support to it so that it could conduct its work and disseminate its findings.

9. **Mr. Assaf** (Lebanon) observed that, although it was difficult to fully harness natural radiation, it should be possible to bring atomic radiation resulting from human activities under control or at least to attenuate its harmful effects. It was impossible not to be concerned about the fallout from weapons testing or the consequences of ionizing radiation produced by accidents in nuclear power plants, which should all be placed under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The Middle East was particularly threatened by atomic radiation because Israeli nuclear facilities were not always under that safeguards regime. Israel must therefore comply with Security Council resolution 487 (1981), which called upon it to place its nuclear facilities under the safeguards of the IAEA, and with the General Assembly resolutions to that effect.

10. The Scientific Committee had thus far acquitted itself well of the task assigned to it by the General Assembly in 1955. It was therefore unfortunate that financial difficulties had kept it from holding its regular 2002 session. His delegation supported the request to UNEP by the Chairperson of that Committee that it reconsider the matter of the Committee's financial situation to enable it to continue fulfilling its mandate effectively.

11. **Mr. Mohammed** (Iraq) said that his delegation attached particular importance to the studies, projects and observations of the Scientific Committee, which revealed the extreme toxicity of the ionizing radiation. In Iraq, such radiation was a particularly serious problem since the use in 1991, by the United States Armed Forces, of military devices containing depleted uranium.

12. Many studies had shown that depleted uranium was as dangerous for the health and the environment as any other source of atomic radiation. Reports by the specialized agencies and humanitarian organizations operating in Iraq had, furthermore, drawn attention to the deterioration of the health situation in the country, especially in areas close to the 1991 war theatre, where debris containing depleted uranium was still being found. Children were those who suffered the most, as evidenced by the considerable rise among children of cases of leukaemia, bone and skin cancers and congenital malformations. The rest of the population was also affected, as could be seen in the growing prevalence of breast cancers and the appearance of hitherto unknown diseases.

13. The situation was aggravated by the lack of medical supplies and drugs owing to the embargo imposed on the country. Iraq had asked the IAEA for technical assistance in countering the effects of the attacks on its nuclear plants and of the hundreds of tons of bombs containing depleted uranium that the United States Armed Forces had released over its territory, but it had received no response. The new war that the United States was planning to launch against Iraq could further worsen the situation.

14. Iraq supported the Scientific Committee Chairperson's request to the Executive Director of UNEP for reconsideration of the matter of the Committee's financial situation and appropriation of more funds to enable it to carry out its mandate.

15. **Mr. Elashi** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that ionizing radiation was currently one of the most serious threats that human beings faced because it jeopardized the health of current and future generations. In the Near and Middle East, a rise in radiation owing to the presence of Israeli nuclear facilities was all the more disquieting in that Israel possessed every type of weapon of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, and refused to recognize that ionizing radiation was being released by its nuclear facilities or to place those facilities under IAEA safeguards. The international community should do everything needed to force Israel to do so and to eliminate its nuclear weapons, so that the region could become a nuclear-weapon-free zone no longer exposed to nuclear danger.

16. Although some nuclear Powers had discontinued nuclear testing and used every precaution in transporting and burying their radioactive wastes, much still needed to be done to neutralize the nuclear danger. In order to achieve that goal, nuclear technology would have to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes, in particular agricultural and medical purposes, and all countries would accordingly have to renounce any military applications. From that same standpoint, the nuclear Powers which buried their nuclear wastes in the sea, the ocean or the desert would have to be held accountable for such actions, which put all humanity at extreme risk.

17. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya invited all countries and all competent international bodies to cooperate and to publish regular information on ionizing radiation. It also invited the nuclear Powers to stop conducting nuclear research for military purposes and to establish and implement specific programmes s to do away with all nuclear weapons by a specific date.

18. **Mr. Fallouh** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his Government had a great interest in ionizing radiation sources and the impact of radiation on health and the environment, and that it supported the Scientific Committee's new programme of work. It was consequently very concerned by that Committee's lack of funding which was hampering its proper functioning. That crisis had to be resolved so that the Committee could discharge its mandate from the General Assembly. The creation of a web site making the Committee documents available to the public at large was a welcome development.

19. The Syrian Arab Republic's policy was to use nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes, specifically in the areas of medicine, industry, agriculture, development, the environment and the economy. It had always cautioned against the attempts of certain States to impose draconian conditions on the transfer of technology to countries wishing to use it for peaceful purposes.

20. His Government was aware of the need to eliminate nuclear arsenals because of the inherent dangers. It was party to the 1969 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and was implementing its safeguard agreement with IAEA. It had launched an appeal for the creation in the Middle East of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and especially nuclear weapons. There was an imbalance in the region caused by the fact that Israel was the only State to possess a nuclear arsenal that was not under the control of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and was not subject to IAEA safeguards, constituting a factor for instability and a source of terror in the region. Given the serious consequences of ionizing radiation for the neighbouring countries, the international community must put pressure on Israel to submit to the safeguards system.

21. **Mr. Chaudhry** (Pakistan) announced that his delegation was sponsoring the draft resolution under the agenda item, and praised the work of the Scientific Committee. He was deeply concerned by the fact that the Committee had not been able to hold its regular session in 2002 because of a budgetary shortfall. The Scientific Committee was working in the interests of all Member States and had to be able to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly. He hoped that UNEP would honour its obligations and thus enable the Committee to pursue its work.

22. Pakistan fully supported the Scientific Committee's programme of work adopted in April 2001, particularly with regard to the studies on the health effects from the Chernobyl accident and on the effects of radon, the cellular and molecular studies of radiation's effects on tissues and organs, and the studies on diseases other than cancer. Despite the reassuring conclusion that radiation exposure did not seem to cause hereditary effects in human beings, the new emerging data, especially on DNA mutations, had to be analysed. The Scientific Committee's conclusions should be reviewed in the light of the scientific research in molecular biology, genome sequencing and epidemiology as well as technological advances in related fields in order to remove the remaining uncertainties and increase the degree of confidence in the Committee's findings.

23. Pakistan would continue to support the Committee's intention to pursue its studies on the health effects from the Chernobyl accident with a view to completing and publishing its findings by 2005. It appreciated the close collaboration between the Scientific Committee and scientists from Member States affected by that accident because of the expertise those scientists could contribute. Pakistan assured the Scientific Committee of its fullest cooperation and its readiness to assist it in its efforts to minimize the impact of atomic radiation on human beings and the environment.

Draft resolution A/C.4/57/L.7: Effects of atomic radiation

24. **Mr. Cordeiro** (Brazil) read out a list of the delegations which had joined the sponsors of the resolution: Armenia, Austria, Bulgaria, China, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Egypt, Germany, India, Indonesia, Israel, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, the Russian Federation, Singapore and South Africa. He proposed that the sixth preambular paragraph should be revised by adding, at the end, the clause "and expressing its intention to consider the issue further at its next

session". He suggested that the Committee should adopt the draft resolution by consensus as it had done in preceding years.

25. **The Chairman**, noting that there was no objection to the revision proposed orally by Brazil, said that the Secretariat had informed him that the draft resolution had no financial implications.

26. **Ms. Filipenko** (Ukraine) and **Mr. Popov** (Belarus) announced that they wished to become sponsors of the draft resolution.

27. *Draft resolution A/C.4/57/L.7, as orally revised, was adopted without a vote.*

28. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 74.

Agenda item 19: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (*continued*)

Revised draft resolution A/C.4/57/L.6: Question of Tokelau

29. **Mr. Huntley** (Saint Lucia), speaking as Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, said that a revision had been made in the preamble to take specific note of the United Nations Mission to Tokelau in 2002. He proposed a further revision, in the last preambular paragraph, where the words "successful decolonization" should be replaced by the words "successful cooperation for decolonization", because the decolonization process was not yet complete. He drew attention to paragraphs 16, 17, 18 and 19, and once again thanked the New Zealand Government for its spirit of cooperation. He proposed that the Committee should adopt the draft resolution as revised, for transmission to the General Assembly.

30. **Mr. Requeijo** (Cuba) asked the Secretariat to go over the Spanish version of the draft resolution because there was a great difference between the original English text and the Spanish and French versions. For example, the term "Modern House" had been rendered in Spanish by "*Cámara Moderna*", whereas in the context of Tokelau the term "House" should be taken not in the sense of "House of Representatives" but in the sense of "home" as in "*casa moderna*". The Secretariat should make a technical correction in the translation, which was at variance with the original English text.

31. **The Chairman** asked the Secretariat to take note of the comments of the Cuban delegation and make the necessary changes.

32. **Mr. Musonda** (Zambia) asked if the report of the United Nations Mission to Tokelau had been issued.

33. **Ms. Wilkinson** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the Committee had decided to consider the question of Tokelau on the basis of the conference room paper in the original language (English), on the understanding that the document would subsequently be issued in the other languages. The Mission had returned in late August-early September and had been unable to submit its report to Conference Services until late September. With the new document processing system that was very strict, it had not been possible, for logistical reasons, to have the report translated into all languages.

34. **Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoué** (Côte d'Ivoire) said that his delegation supported the revision of the draft resolution proposed by the Chairman of the Special Committee and, making a point similar to the one made by the Cuban delegation, that the French text should reflect that revision of the last preambular paragraph.

35. *Revised draft resolution A/C.4/57/L.6, as further revised orally, was adopted without a vote.*

Rights of reply

36. **Mr. Mekel** (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his Government considered the various allegations made regarding the Israeli nuclear facilities to be false and groundless, and politically motivated. Since the installation of the Israeli nuclear reactors, there had never been any accidents or leakages of radioactive materials into the environment. Moreover, the Israeli authorities regularly conducted studies to determine the level of radioactivity in the country's environment. None of those studies had revealed a rise in the level of radioactivity.

37. **Mr. Assaf** (Lebanon), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, acknowledged that thus far no radiation had escaped from the Israeli nuclear reactors, but said that it did not mean that there was no risk or probability that it might eventually happen. The reason for asking Israel to make its facilities subject to IAEA

safeguards was to ensure that there would be no accident in the future. That request had not emanated from his own delegation but from the international community, and the Security Council in particular. He read out paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 487 (1981), which called upon Israel urgently to place its nuclear facilities under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. If Israel wanted to remain adamant about not submitting its installations to the IAEA safeguards regime, it should take that up with the international community.

38. **Mr. Fallouh** (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the Committee had once again heard an Israeli statement full of falsehoods. His Government had called for making the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction; it had made its own facilities subject to IAEA safeguards and had signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The fears aroused by ionizing radiation were very real, and many newspapers, both Hebrew and Arabic, had reported radiation escaping from one Israeli reactor. The Israeli nuclear plants would not give out pleasant odours but rather radioactive emissions that would sow death and destruction in the region and in the world. The Israeli delegation was defending ionizing radiation before a body which had unequivocally expressed its position on the matter.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.

United Nations A/C.4/57/SR.12

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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 12th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 18 October 2002, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Maitland ..... (South Africa)

Contents

Agenda item 78: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

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Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

02-64755 (E)
0264755

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 78: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (A/RES/56/225 A, A/RES/56/225 B and A/56/863)

1. **Mr. Guéhenno** (Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations) said that the past year had been a very good year for peacekeeping operations, culminating in East Timor's accession to independence on 20 May 2002 and the installation of a new Government in Sierra Leone following elections held in May 2002. The United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina would come to an end on 31 December 2002 and hand over its responsibilities to the European Union Police Mission, having successfully completed its mandate in the area of police reform and restructuring and developed guidelines and procedures that could be applied to future civilian police components of peacekeeping operations. The United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka was also winding down.

2. New challenges had emerged for two peacekeeping operations in Africa: the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), a traditional peacekeeping operation interposed between two States, and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which was deployed within a State whose conflict had had significant regional dimensions. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the first new operation established since the issuance of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809) (Brahimi report) had been conceived quite differently: establishment of an integrated mission task force; deployment of a multinational force; heavy dependence on Afghan ownership of the process; integration of relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction activities under a single pillar; and designation of lead nations for tasks such as army and police restructuring, judicial reform and drug control.

3. Over the past two years there had been intensive debate on how to restructure and strengthen the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, laying the foundations for the innovations and enhancements required to make future peacekeeping operations more effective. The creation of 184 additional posts, while fewer than had been requested by the Organization, had helped build the capacities of the Department, although recruitment had been slower than expected in 2002 because of the sheer number of applications. Meanwhile, more needed to be done to ensure gender balance within the Department, as noted by the Security Council in its resolution 1325 (2000). In that context, he drew attention to two studies that highlighted both the positive and the negative impact that the introduction of peacekeepers and humanitarian workers could have on societies emerging from conflict; one prepared by two independent experts working on behalf of the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the other prepared under the auspices of the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women. Those studies indicated that the Department and its partners must strengthen disciplinary measures and training programmes to ensure that a gender perspective was built into all aspects of their work.

4. Turning to peacekeeping operations themselves, he said that the Secretary-General would provide an update on follow-up to the recommendations made by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and in the Brahimi report, in his next annual report to the Special Committee. Six issues warranted particular attention on the part of the Secretariat and Member States. First and foremost, rapid deployment capacity: significant progress had been achieved, with the allocation of $140 million for the creation of strategic deployment stocks (SDS) with a view to rapidly equipping any new mission. That operation had been launched on 1 July 2002, when the funding had become available, and should be completed by July 2003, with the development of an inventory management system to be installed initially at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi. A stock rotation and maintenance policy had been developed for all SDS commodities and would be implemented starting with the 2003-2004 budget cycle. More expertise must still be developed in areas such as supply chain management, warehousing, codification and cataloguing, however.

5. Materiel readiness was only one part of the equation; rapid deployment also required military, civilian police and civilian personnel. The on-call lists proposed in the Brahimi report in the context of the United Nations Standby Arrangements System posed problems in practice and required innovative

approaches, as the Special Committee had recommended in its most recent report. The Special Committee had also recommended that the Secretariat identify core planning teams within a generic mission headquarters. In response, the Military Division had prepared job descriptions for 154 positions, 9 of which would form the core planning element. Since those posts would have to be filled rapidly, military personnel would be selected from a list of candidates proposed by Member States, with due regard for geographical balance and mission requirements. To date 29 Member States had agreed to participate in the on-call lists. The on-call list system was complementary to a new rapid deployment level which had gone into effect on 25 July 2002. It was important, however, to widen the geographic base of on-call personnel and ensure that the system was fully utilized for the next new peacekeeping operation.

6. The Civilian Police Division had identified civilian police positions for a generic mission headquarters, in consultation with Member States, but Governments had not yet put forward candidates. On the civilian side, the Secretariat had now built a cadre of very seasoned staff, in both the substantive and the support areas, which would make it possible to release staff to new missions without detriment to the work at Headquarters. At the same time, efforts must be made to increase the number of senior staff, who were in short supply compared with their colleagues at other levels, because they played a critical role in organizing new missions. The Office of Mission Support was instituting new training programmes. Along with the systems for advance preparations, training programmes and in situ briefings, the on-call lists and SDS should shorten the deployment times for mission headquarters.

7. A perfect Department or a perfect mission headquarters was no substitute for the provision of troops in a timely manner. The situation gave cause for deep concern, because the majority of the troop-contributing countries were developing countries which could not continue to bear that burden alone. Of course, many countries were reducing their military budgets and their military resources were being overdrawn, whether for peacekeeping missions authorized by the United Nations or within voluntary coalitions of States. Those same countries were providing a major proportion of the financial contributions to peacekeeping operations and for humanitarian assistance and aid to development and reconstruction. Moreover, it would take time for the after-effects of past participation in the missions in Bosnia, Rwanda and Somalia to disappear.

8. At all events, the credibility and viability of United Nations peacekeeping operations were being jeopardized. Only the United Nations was able to provide a truly international response to threats to international peace and security, and when only one part of the world participated fully in operations, that universality was threatened. There was also a problem of capacities, because only a few countries could meet certain needs, and that situation had direct implications for the rapid deployment of forces in many areas. There was a need to secure the participation of Member States which were in a position to provide formed units as well as individual personnel. Member States attached high importance to peacekeeping operations, but encountered real obstacles to participating in them. A frank and open debate was necessary to find solutions to those problems.

9. With regard to African peacekeeping capacity, there was an urgent need to increase the number of countries able to provide well-trained and fully equipped contingents. As the summit meeting of the Group of Eight had stressed in its plan of action for Africa, the continent's peacekeeping capacity must be enhanced without delay, and to that end the mechanisms used for that purpose must be reviewed. In the first place, there was a need to consult regional and subregional organizations and African capitals, and Secretariat staff, including staff from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, had begun to do that with a view to determining how to proceed.

10. Bilateral efforts to train and equip potential troop-contributing countries were very useful, but they needed to be harmonized in order to ensure coordination between the various contingents participating in a peacekeeping operation. Standardization of the training material and courses used by national trainers was a major factor in ensuring coordination. The Department had made considerable progress in that regard over the past year, particularly in the development of a standardized generic training module. The Department's Training and Evaluation Service had conducted four seminars, each in a different region, in order to introduce the draft modules. The seminars had gained important feedback from troop-contributing countries, which should make it possible to finalize the modules by the end of 2002.

The next report of the Secretary-General, which would be submitted to the Special Committee, would include a detailed description of the standardized generic training module, and of the various training initiatives completed or under way, both for military personnel and civilian police, and for civilian personnel.

11. The training materials made little reference to the role of peacekeepers in the area of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration because that role was traditionally undertaken at the bilateral level, in parallel with the peacekeeping tasks performed by the Blue Helmets. However, recent experience, especially in Sierra Leone, the Great Lakes region and Afghanistan, had demonstrated once again that the convergence of the two activities could not be ignored.

12. The composition of a newly formed military in the aftermath of war was a deeply political exercise involving ethnic, religious and regional balance. Scaling back the size of the army in a democratic State was closely linked to promotion of good governance and must be approached from a political, developmental and economic perspective. Any United Nations operation responsible for playing a central role in the political process must cooperate with bilateral actors participating in the reform of the security sector, for example to facilitate the payment of newly recruited soldiers, since many donors had difficulty in doing so directly, as was currently the case in Afghanistan. Political considerations were also very important in deciding who should be disarmed and demobilized and who should be recruited or retained within a new army. Security sector reform, on the one hand, and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, on the other, were quite separate processes, but they were clearly related, and required specialized skills in many common areas. They were also linked with the intensive reconstruction efforts which, if well targeted and promptly undertaken, could provide jobs for demobilized soldiers.

13. The strengthening of national rule of law capacities was important to ensure the successful reform of national military structures. The role of each peacekeeping operation in that sphere must be specified in its mandate. The Special Committee had supported the Secretariat's proposal to create a small, new capacity within the Civilian Police Division responsible for providing advice on judicial matters and criminal law. The Department had recommended that the Executive Committee on Peace and Security should establish a system-wide task force in order to avoid duplication and to maximize existing competencies. That task force, which comprised representatives of 11 United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes, had been established and had submitted a detailed report in mid-August to the Executive Committee, which had approved it on 30 September. The Organization needed to consult more closely with local actors in the country concerned so as not to impose a strategy on them.

14. Regarding best practices, he said that he intended to make the Peacekeeping Best Practices Group fully operational by filling vacant posts, including that of the chief and deputy chief, by the end of 2002. It was vital for the Group to establish a solid and transparent working relationship with Member States, because that would be the Department's point of entry for a number of issues pertinent to the work of the Committee and the Special Committee, and for the application of best practices in general. It was essential that best practices from previous and ongoing missions should be reflected in planning, training and support for all current and future missions by establishing guidelines and procedures which would be compiled in the *Handbook on UN Multi-dimensional Peacekeeping Operations*. That handbook, which was intended for all staff serving in peacekeeping missions as well as troop- and police-contributing countries, United Nations agencies and international and national non-governmental organizations, was designed to promote better understanding of the establishment and functioning of peacekeeping operations.

15. The handbook, which would consist of two volumes, should be published by the end of 2003. The first volume, which would be printed, would contain a general description of the various elements and components which made up the myriad aspects of peacekeeping; the second volume, which would be published on a CD-Rom, would contain more detailed information on the chapters of the first volume. The handbook would reflect the evolution of peacekeeping operations and all Member States were invited to contribute their ideas on the subject. If they wished, they could contact the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit during the following month in order to take an unofficial look at the contents of the handbook.

16. Along with the preparation of the handbook, the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit was reviewing lessons learned from the United Nations Mission in

Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and, when the research was more advanced, it would be very useful to have the views of Member States and of troop-contributing countries.

17. With regard to appointments to senior posts, which had not been created but were vacant because of staff movements, in some cases the candidates selected had not accepted the offers made to them; in other cases, it had been decided to expand the list of candidates in order to secure a better combination of skills, geographical representation and better representation of women and, for that reason, a new vacancy announcement had been issued. Experience had shown that it was preferable not to be too hasty so as to make the right choice. It was very hard to replace Major-General Tim Ford and Major-General Chitra Gurung, whose services and dedication had been remarkable, not because of a lack of candidates, but because of the need to choose between highly qualified candidates. The Secretary-General would soon be officially announcing his decision to appoint Major-General Martin Agwai of Nigeria, Deputy Force Commander of UNAMSIL, to replace Major-General Gurung as Deputy Military Adviser to the Secretary-General. Major-General Agwai's record in United Nations peacekeeping operations and in his own country indicated that he would undoubtedly be a valuable asset to the Department. He would be taking up his post over the next few weeks. The Secretary-General would soon make an official announcement of his decision to appoint Major-General Cammaert of the Netherlands as Military Adviser to replace Major-General Ford. Major-General Cammaert had distinguished himself in three United Nations peacekeeping operations on three different continents as commander of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (1992-1993); as commander of the forward headquarters of the rapid reaction forces on mount Igman, in support of the United Nations Protection Force (1995); and most recently, as force commander of UNMEE. In view of his experience at the head of the high readiness brigade, his contribution would be invaluable for initiatives to strengthen the rapid deployment capacities of the United Nations. The vacant posts at the director level had not been filled, because the selection procedures had not yet been finalized. That applied, in particular, to the post of director of the Civilian Police Division, for which the vacancy announcement had been recirculated recently.

18. In conclusion, he announced that, pursuant to paragraphs 126 and 127 of the report of the Secretary-General entitled: "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387), the Department would be the lead department for UNAMA as of 1 November 2002.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.